

What is claimed is:

1. A method for neutralizing biological properties of human type I interferon (IFN), comprising contacting a cell that expresses a human type I interferon receptor (IFN-R) with a monoclonal antibody characterized by the following properties:
  - (a) the monoclonal antibody recognizes an epitope on amino acid sequence 27-427 of SEQ ID NOS: 1 or 2 of the human type I IFN-R; and
  - (b) the monoclonal antibody has a neutralizing capacity *in vitro* against the antiproliferative or antiviral activity of human type I IFN.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein the monoclonal antibody inhibits the binding of a human type I IFN to the human type I IFN-R.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein the monoclonal antibody is obtainable from a hybridoma cell prepared by fusion of a myeloma cell with spleen cells from an animal previously immunized with a soluble form of the human type I IFN-R.
4. The method of claim 1, wherein the monoclonal antibody recognizes an epitope on a soluble form of human cellular type I IFN-R or of human recombinant type I IFN-R.
5. The method of claim 1, wherein the monoclonal antibody inhibits *in vitro* the binding of human type I IFN to human cellular type I IFN-R when said human type I IFN is co-incubated with cells expressing human cellular type I IFN-R, at a concentration of said antibody equal or inferior to 100 µg/ml.
6. The method of claim 5, wherein said antibody concentration is equal or inferior to 50 µg/ml.
7. The method of claim 5, wherein said antibody concentration is equal or inferior to 20 µg/ml.
8. The method of claim 5, wherein said antibody concentration is in the range of about 0.5 to 2 µg/ml.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein the monoclonal antibody neutralizes *in vitro* the antiproliferative activity of human type I IFN on Daudi cells at a concentration in a range of 1 to 10 µg/ml.
10. The method of claim 1, wherein the monoclonal antibody neutralizes *in vitro* the antiproliferative activity of human type I IFN on LY28 cells at a concentration in a range of 50 to 100 µg/ml.
11. The method of claim 1, wherein the monoclonal antibody neutralizes *in vitro* the antiviral activity of human type I IFN on Daudi cells at a concentration in a range of 1 to 50 µg/ml for a concentration of type I IFN in the range of 1 to 1000 units with reference to the international standard MRC69/19.
12. The method of claim 11, wherein said antibody is at a concentration in a range of 1 to 20 µg/ml.
13. The method of claim 1, wherein the monoclonal antibody does not bind to human interferon gamma receptor.
14. The method of claim 1, wherein the monoclonal antibody is an IgG1 type antibody.
15. A method for neutralizing biological properties of human type I interferon (IFN), comprising contacting a cell that expresses a human type I interferon receptor (IFN-R) with a 64G12 monoclonal antibody directed against the human type I IFN-R, said antibody being deposited at the ECACC on Feb. 26, 1992 under No. 92022605.